

Testimony on HB 5131
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I have worked for over two decades as a so-called temporary, part-time employee—as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Connecticut and Eastern Connecticut State University. Much of this time, I have had full-time equivalent work, with 2 courses per semester at each institution (however, the number of courses is dependent on a variety of circumstances). During this time, I have held office hours, written letters of recommendation for students, and done service to the profession. I have conducted research, attended conferences when I am able (often at my own expense), and published (with minimal support beyond access to university libraries).

The federal government has a category for permanent, part-time employees, which includes—besides job security and equitable pay—benefits. In Connecticut, providing healthcare benefits to part-time employees would be a step in the right direction [see note 1].

Census documents and peer-reviewed studies show that women and people of color make up the majority of part-time, contingent jobs. This affects our access to healthcare and pension benefits and negatively impacts our standard of living. When women and people of color get full-time jobs in academia, however, these are more likely to be non-tenure-track positions, with lower pay and fewer benefits, according to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA) [2, 3].

Universities have been required to address disparities in race and gender among faculty, but recent hiring has been concentrated in part-time, non-tenure track positions with few or no benefits. This trend of “permanently temporary” work—which I have lived for over two decades—is detrimental to student outcomes and to the standard of living and professional development of women and people of color [4]. It also compromises the standards of freedom of expression and shared governance in academia.

Relevant research:

1. Permanent Part Time Federal Jobs

“There is no law or regulation that limits part-time employment to specific jobs or grade levels. Any job may be filled by a part-time employee or a team of job sharers when the arrangement meets the needs of the organization and the employee. To meet the needs of the office or the employee, an agency may temporarily or permanently change the hours of a part-time employee. However, generally part-timers have schedules within the 16 to 32 hour-per-week range.”

“Part-time employees under permanent appointments are eligible for the same benefits as full-time employees, with certain special considerations relating to eligibility, coverage, and other limitations.”

<https://ask.fedweek.com/career-hiring/part-time-jobs-federal-government/>

2. Representation: gender and underrepresented people of color:

AAUP reports <https://www.aaup.org/report/contingent-appointments-and-academic-profession>

Women are more strongly represented among part-time faculty than among full-time faculty. As of 1998, 48 percent of all part-time faculty were female, while only 36 percent of all full-time faculty were female.¹⁵ Women who do hold full-time positions are more strongly represented among lecturer and instructor positions, with little opportunity for tenure. As of 2000, women made up 55 percent of lecturers, 58 percent of instructors, 46 percent of assistant professors, 36 percent of associate professors, and only 21 percent of full professors.¹⁶ Although the participation of women in the academic profession is increasing overall, the increase comes at a time when opportunities for full-time tenured positions are declining.

Additional reports <https://www.aaup.org/report/tenure-and-teaching-intensive-appointments>

3. Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA) Study.

<https://www.tiaainstitute.org/publication/adjunct-faculty-survey-2018>

Key Insights

- About 70% of adjuncts are over age 40, and 52% are **women**. Most (56%) earned a master's as their highest degree attained; one third have a Ph.D.
- 4. Universities and colleges are now hiring “part-time positions limited to a single course for a single academic term and full-time fix-term positions, most often for one to three years of employment, that do not lead to consideration for tenure,” says John Curtis, director of research and public policy for the association and co-author of the report.

<http://fortune.com/2011/05/05/the-rise-of-the-permanently-temporary-worker/>

Respectfully submitted,

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